132642 - The hadeeth “O slaves of Allah, help me” is not saheeh

the question

How sound is the hadeeth “O slaves of Allah, help me”?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

This hadith was narrated by at-Tabaraani in al-Mu‘jam al-Kabeer (17/117) via ‘Abd ar-Rahmaan ibn Shurayk who said: My father told me, from ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Eesa, from Zayd ibn ‘Ali, from ‘Utbah ibn Ghazwaan, from the Prophet of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) who said: “If one of you loses something, or one of you wants help, and he is in a land in which there are no people, then let him say, ‘O slaves of Allah, help me; O slaves of Allah, help me,’ for Allah has slaves whom we do not see.”

There are three problems with this hadeeth which mean that it must be da‘eef. They are:

1.‘Abd ar-Rahmaan ibn Shurayk ibn ‘Abdullah an-Nakha‘i al-Kufi

Abu Haatim said: He is weak in narration of hadeeth.

End quote from al-Jarh wa at-Ta‘deel (5/244)

Ibn Hibbaan mentioned him in ath-Thiqaat (8/375) and said: He sometimes makes mistakes.

Al-Haafiz said in at-Taqreeb (p. 342): He is sadooq (honest) but makes mistakes.

See also: Tahdheeb at-Tahdheeb (6/176).

2.Shurayk ibn ‘Abdullah an-Nakha‘i

The scholars highlighted his poor memory and lack of precision. Al-Haafiz said concerning him: He is sadooq (honest) but makes many mistakes; his memory changed after he was appointed as a judge in Kufah.

End quote from Taqreeb at-Tahdheeb (p. 266)

3.Zayd ibn ‘Ali ibn al-Husayn did not meet ‘Utbah ibn Ghazwaan or hear from him. Between the death of ‘Utbah and the birth of Zayd there were approximately sixty years.

See: Tahdheeb at-Tahdheeb (2/249, 4/64)

Hence al-Haythami said concerning the hadeeth: It was narrated by at-Tabaraani and its men were regarded as trustworthy even though some of them were somewhat da‘eef (weak). But Zayd ibn ‘Ali did not meet ‘Utbah.

End quote from Majma‘ az-Zawaa’id (10/93)

There is corroborating evidence for this hadeeth in the marfoo‘ hadeeth of Ibn Mas‘ood: “If the mount of one of you disappears in the wilderness, let him call out: ‘O slaves of Allah, bring it back to me,’ for Allah has (angels) present on earth who will bring it back to you.”

This was narrated by at-Tabaraani in al-Mu‘jam al-Kabeer (10/217); Abu Ya‘la in his Musnad (9/177). It is also da‘eef; it was classed as such by al-Haythami in Majma‘ az-Zawaa’id (10/132), al-Haafiz Ibn Hajar in Sharh al-Adhkaar (5/150); al-Haafiz as-Sakhkhaawi in al-Ibtihaaj bi Adhkaar al-Musaafir wa’l-Haaj (p. 39).

Shaykh al-Albaani discussed this hadeeth in detail in as-Silsilah ad-Da‘eefah, where he (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

In addition to the fact that this hadeeth is da‘eef (weak), there is nothing in the text to suggest that it is permissible to seek the help of the dead, such as the awliya’ (“saints”; close friends of

Allah) and the righteous, because it clearly indicates that what is meant by the slaves of Allah here is some creation other than human beings.

This is based on the fact that in the first hadeeth he says: “for Allah has (angels) present on earth who will bring it back to you,” and in this hadeeth he says: “Allah has slaves whom we do not see.”

This description can only apply to the angels or the jinn, because they are the ones who we do not usually see. … So it is not permissible to include with them Muslims among the jinn or humans whom they call “men of the unseen,” such as the awliya’ and the righteous, whether they are alive or dead. Seeking help from them and seeking their aid is blatant shirk, because they cannot hear the supplication, and even if they could hear it, they would not be able to respond and fulfil the request.

This is clearly stated in many verses, including the passage in which Allah, may He be blessed and exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And those, whom you invoke or call upon instead of Him, own not even a Qitmeer (the thin membrane over the date stone).

If you invoke (or call upon) them, they hear not your call, and if (in case) they were to hear, they could not grant it (your request) to you. And on the Day of Resurrection, they will disown your worshipping them. And none can inform you (O Muhammad SAW) like Him Who is the All-Knower (of each and everything)”

[Faatir 35:13-14].

End quote from Silsilat al-Ahaadeeth ad-Da‘eefah wa’l-Mawdoo‘ah (656).

And Allah knows best.